

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 06984

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (MONDALE, WALTER F.)
SUBJECT: VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE

1. SUMMARY: OBJECTIONS TO EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH
OPPOSITION COULD BE RAISED DURING VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.

2. WHILE GREETING FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO APRIL 29
AT JAPANESE NATIONAL DAY, I REMARKED THAT WE ARE LOOKING
FORWARD TO VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE. "SO ARE WE,"
REPLIED ROMULO, "EVEN IF YOU DO CUT OUR MILITARY ASSIS-
TANCE \$5 MILLION." I REPLIED THAT WAS NOT THE VICE
PRESIDENT'S DOING. HE AGREED, AND IN THE PRESENCE OF THE
EGYPTIAN AND INDONESIAN AMBASSADORS WENT ON TO REGISTER
A BLUNT COMPLAINT AGAINST AMERICAN EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH
THE OPPOSITION.

3. ROMULO SAID THE GOP KNOWS THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN IN
CONTACT WITH THE OPPOSITION AND CONSIDERS THAT CONTACT
INAPPROPRIATE. I POINTED OUT THAT SUCH CONTACT BY THE
EMBASSY IS RESTRAINED AND PROBABLY LESS THAN WOULD
CUSTOMARILY BE EXPECTED. ROMULO WAS NOT SATISFIED AND
TO MY SURPRISE MAINTAINED THAT THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY
IN WASHINGTON DEALS ONLY WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND HAS NO
CONTACTS WITH THE REPUBLICANS.

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4. ROMULO CONTINED, "WE DON'T HAVE YOU BUGGED, BUT
WE KNOW EVERYTHING THAT GOES ON IN THE AMERICAN EMBASSY.
WE KNOW THAT SENATOR MITRA (LABAN CANDIDATE IN RECENT
ELECTIONS) WAS A GUEST AT RECENT FAREWELL/WELCOME PARTY
FOR CHARGE/DCM GIVEN BY EMBASSY OFFICER." ROMULO
REMINDING ME THAT HE HAD WARNED US AGAINST MITRA (AS

INAPPROPRIATE FOR ANY MEETING WITH VICE PRESIDENT).

5. COMMENT: ROMULO OF COURSE KNOWS FULL WELL ABOUT STANDARD DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE CONCERNING CONTACT WITH THE OPPOSITION. THE ONLY SPECIFIC CITED BY HIM SEEMS WELL WITHIN CUSTOMARY BOUNDS; INDEED HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW'S SISTER AND HER HUSBAND WERE PRESENT AT THAT LARGE SOCIAL OCCASION. (WE, OF COURSE, HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH RECENTLY WITH VARIOUS PEOPLE ROMULO MIGHT DEFINE AS "OPPOSITION," IN CONNECTION WITH OUR PREPARATIONS FOR THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT.)

6. WHILE ROMULO DID NOT PUT IT IN SO MANY WORDS, I WAS LEFT WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT WE MAY NOT HAVE HEARD THE LAST OF HIS COMPLAINT ABOUT THIS EMBASSY AND THE OPPOSITION, AND THAT ROMULO MAY SURFACE IT AGAIN DURING THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT. THE COMPLAINT IS NOT NEW, OF COURSE, BUT IT CURRENTLY IS FED BY HEIGHTENED GOP ANXIETIES IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE APRIL 7 ELECTIONS. MOREOVER, THE COMPLAINT IS AGGRAVATED BY ROMULO'S ILL DISGUISED SUSPICION THAT THE EMBASSY MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PREJUDICING AND MISGUIDING WASHINGTON ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PHILIPPINES. OTHERWISE, HOW COULD THE WESTERN PRESS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE GET EVERYTHING SO WRONG? STULL

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